

7
162
L E T T E R

FROM

THE COMMITTEE

OF

ULSTER VOLUNTEERS

R
TO THE

Duke of *Richmond*;

THE

DUKE of *RICHMOND*'s

• A N S W E R ;

TOGETHER WITH

H I S B I L L

FOR

A Parliamentary Reform.

1783.

LETTER

FROM THE COMMITTEE

OF THE DUBLIN VOLUNTEERS

TO THE

Duke of Richmond;

THE

Duke of Richmond's



AND HIS

TOGETHER WITH

HIS BILL

FOR

A Parliamentary Reform.

1832

LETTER from the Committee of
Correspondence at Lisburn to
the Duke of RICHMOND.

AT a Meeting of the Committee of Correspondence, appointed by the Delegates of Forty-five Volunteer Corps assembled at *Lisburn* on the 1st of July instant, held at *Belfast* the 19th of July, 1783,

Present, LIEUT. COL. SHARMAN
in the Chair ;

ORDERED, *That the following Letter, signed by the Secretary in the Name of this Committee, be forwarded to His Grace the Duke of RICHMOND, inclosing a Copy of the Resolutions of the Provincial Meeting of Volunteers of Munster, and of the Proceedings of the Forty-five Volunteer Delegates assembled at Lisburn on the 1st Instant, respecting a Parliamentary Reform, as also a Copy of the circular Letter written this Day by this Committee to the several Volunteer Corps of this Province.*

BELFAST, 19th July, 1783.

May it please your GRACE,

YOUR GRACE'S Attachment to the
Rights of the People, and the general
Prosperity of the British Empire, in-
duce
A

duce us to address you on the present great and momentous Occasion.

The Spirit of Freedom which pervades all Ranks of People in Ireland with the Justice and wise policy of the British Nation, having removed for ever all possible Cause of Jealousy between the Sister Kingdoms, and united us to Britain on the Basis of equal Liberty and similar Constitution, it becomes the Duty, as it is the Interest of each Kingdom to assist the other in their Endeavours to restore to its antient Purity and Vigour a decay'd, enfeebled and sickly Constitution. In both Nations it is now generally acknowledged, that this great Object can be attained by *no* other Means but by a Reform of the Representation in Parliament. In England the Measure has for the present miscarried, tho' supported by so many wise, honest, great and independent Men; we trust however it has miscarried only for a Season, and that the next Attempt will prove successful.

Ireland has now taken up the Idea, and if we shall be so happy as to see Success crown our Efforts, we think considerable Weight will be thereby added to the Endeavours of the Friends of the People in England.

England. The People of the two Nations *united* in Pursuit of the same important Object, must be not only powerful, but irresistible.

The inclosed Papers, which we request your Grace may peruse, will shew how far this Country has already gone in determining to procure a more equal Representation, the unanimous Resolutions of about fifteen Thousand Volunteers, already declared in a very few Weeks, assure us that the Resolves of the Delegates of Ulster, who are to assemble at Dungannon on the 8th of September next, will be no less unanimous; and we well know that what the Volunteers, vast Numbers of whom are Freeholders, shall determine on, the other Freeholders and People in general who are not Volunteers, will adopt and support by every Means in their Power. The aged Fathers cannot differ from their Sons, respecting a Matter on which depends every thing that they either hold dear for themselves or their Posterity,

That your Grace may see the very depraved State of our Representation it is necessary to observe, that out of three Hundred Members, of which our House of Commons consists, Two Hundred and

Twenty are returned by Boroughs ; those One Hundred and ten Boroughs are divided into three Classes : 1st. Those where the Right of Election is vested in the Protestant Inhabitants at large. 2d. Those where the Right of Election is vested in the Chief Magistrate, Burgesses and Freemen. 3d. Those where the Right of Election is confined to the Chief Magistrate and Burgesses, frequently not more in Number than five or six, and seldom exceeding ten or twelve. Almost all the Boroughs are either venal and corrupt, or implicitly obedient to the arbitrary Will of their respective Landlords, who dictate to the Electors in the most absolute Manner. Those Landlords claim by Prescription a Kind of Property in those Boroughs, the Patronage of which they transfer by Sale like an Estate, and receive from eight to nine Thousand Pounds for a Borough. A Seat for a Borough is generally sold for Two Thousand Pounds ; so that every seven or eight Years a Borough brings in Four Thousand Pounds to the Patron.

Unhappily for Ireland our Counties also are too much governed by our Peers and Great Men, whose Influence over many of their respective Tenants is very great ;
and

and this Consideration has given rise here to a Doubt, in the Minds of many well-meaning Men, as to the Propriety of adding to the Number of Knights of the Shire; as generally now two great Families endeavour to divide between them the Seats for the County, the others either remain neuter or join the independant Interest, it is alledged were there six Seats for each County, six great Families would divide them, and against such a Junction the independant Freeholders would not be able to make any effectual Opposition. May we now entreat your Grace as a most important Favour conferred not only on us but on this Kingdom, that you may be pleased to favour us with your Grace's Sentiments and Advice, as to the best, the most eligible and the most practicable Mode of destroying, restraining or counteracting this Hydra of Corruption, Borough Influence, that we may be enabled to lay your Grace's Opinion before the provincial Assembly of Delegates at Dunganon, and as our last Meeting for arranging Business previous thereunto is fixed to be on the 20th of August, we hope your Grace will be so obliging as to forward your Reply so as to be with us about that Time. Many Apologies are due for this long Address, and for the very great
 Trouble

Trouble we have requested your Grace to take; but we are young in Politics, and wish for Information from Men of more Wisdom, Experience and Abilities. This however we may venture to assert, that if we can only be directed to the best Mode, the Mass of the Inhabitants of Ireland is at this Moment so completely alive and sensible to the Necessity of a well-digested Reform, that there cannot remain a Doubt that what it attempts in Conjunction with the virtuous Part of England will be effectual. The several Matters on which we have requested your Grace's Opinion are thrown into one View in the following Queries.

In order to the Purity of Parliament, and to restore that constitutional Controul, which the constituent Body should have over the Representative,

1st. Is it necessary that those Boroughs in which the Right of Election is vested in a few, which in general are at the absolute Disposal of one or two Persons, should be disfranchised, and in their Place the County Representatives encreased?

2d. The Protestant Inhabitants consist of near one Million, who return three
Hundred

Hundred Members--- would it be wise to encrease the Number of Representatives for the Kingdom at large ?

3d. A plausible Objection, mentioned above, has been raised against an Encrease of County Representatives. Has that Argument much Weight ? and if it has, is it remediable ?

4th. Should the Right of Suffrage be extended ? If it should, who are the proper Objects of that Extension ?

5th. In order to guard against undue Influence, would it be wise to have the Members returned by Ballot ?

6th. Would not a Limitation of the Duration of Parliaments to a shorter Term than eight Years, have excellent Effects ? and should it be less than triennial ?

7th. If the Abolition of the *enslaved* Boroughs is necessary, would it be equitable or expedient that they should be purchased by the Nation ?

8th.

8th. On the whole, what specific Mode of Reform in the Representation of Ireland best suits your own Ideas, considering the Situation of this Country? and what are the Steps which your Grace conceives best adapted to effect that Reformation?

We request your Grace may be so good to direct your Answer to our Chairman, Lieut. Col. SHARMAN, Lisburn.

We have the Honor to be, with the most perfect Respect,

Your Grace's most obedient and

most humble Servants.

Signed by Order of Committee,

HENRY JOY, Junr.
Sec. of the 45.

To the Duke of RICHMOND.

A more equal Representation of
the People in the PARLIAMENT
of IRELAND.

AT a Meeting of the Provincial Delegates of Munster held in the County Court-house of Cork, on the 1st of March, 1783, the following, among many other Resolves, were entered into :—

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY, That the majority of the Representatives in Parliament are returned by venal Boroughs ; that such Members do not represent the sense of the People ; that the Parliament cannot be virtuous until a more equal representation of the People shall be obtained. We therefore strongly recommend to Parliament, to use the most strenuous exertion to carry the above reform into effect.

AT a meeting of Delegates from Forty-five Corps of the Province of Ulster, assembled at Lisburn the 1st of July, 1783, in pursuance of a public Requisition of the Ulster Regiment,

LIEUT. COL. SHARMAN in the Chair.

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY, That a General Meeting of the Volunteer Delegates of the Province

B

vince of Ulster, on the subject of A MORE EQUAL REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE IN PARLIAMENT, is hereby earnestly entreated; to be held at DUNGAN-NON, on Monday, the *eighth Day of September next.*

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY, That the following Gentlemen (seven to be a quorum) be appointed a Committee of Correspondence for communicating with the other Corps of the Province, for taking preparatory steps to forward the intentions of this Meeting, and for collecting the best Authorities and Information on the subject of a Parliamentary Reform,—viz.

Lieut. Col. SHARMAN,
Capt. BLACK,
Dr. ALEX. CRAWFORD,
Major BURDEN,
Capt. WAD. CUNNINGHAM,
REV. Mr. CRAIG,
Dr. SAMUEL MOORE,
Col. ROWLEY,
Major JOHN CRAWFORD,
Lieut. Col. BANKS,
Mr. ROBERT THOMPSON,
Capt. THOMAS PRENTICE,
Lieut. TOMB.

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY, That the following Address be published in the public Prints:

To

TO THE VOLUNTEER ARMY OF THE
PROVINCE OF ULSTER,

FELLOW-CITIZENS,

IN common with every class of Irishmen, you are sensible that this Kingdom for many centuries might have continued to bear its chains in ignoble and indigent Obscurity, had not an Army of its Citizens, by a great effort, dared to cast them off.

That the dignified conduct of that Army lately restored to the Imperial Crown of Ireland its original splendor, to Nobility its ancient Privileges, and to the Nation at large its inherent Rights as a sovereign independent State;— that by inculcating the glorious spirit of toleration, it has united the once distracted Inhabitants of this Country into an indissoluble Mass; and promoted the most exalted reverence for the Laws,—are facts that will exhibit a splendid and interesting figure in the annals of the Age.

From a military institution, so singular in its nature as to comprehend the several gradations of Nobles, Commoners, Merchants, Yeomen and Mechanics, every substantial good will be expected by wise and virtuous men.

They will with honest pride, behold in the State an unparelled combination of the Military with the civil Character, existing only for the general interests of the Community, and
prepared

prepared, on the purest principles of the Constitution, to give efficacy to the wishes of Three Millions of People.

The idea of a well-digested Parliamentary Reform, has ever experienced a favourable reception in the uncorrupted breasts of Irishmen and of Britons.—It has been uniformly looked up to as the true source of public Virtue and of political Salvation, by the first Characters these Kingdoms have produced. In this Age, we have seen it warmly supported by that consummate Statesman the late EARL of CHATHAM; and revived by the Heir to his Abilities and Name, the present WILLIAM PITT. It has received the sanction of the most eminent and honest Men in both Houses of the British Parliament; of a great number of the most respectable Shires in England; of the Volunteer Delegates of the Province of Munster;—and, within these few Days, of the Unanimous Vote of Thirty-eight Corps, Reviewed at Belfast.

Among the many glorious effects of which a more equal Representation of the People in Parliament would be productive, the following are obvious:—The destruction of that party-spirit whose baneful influence has at all times been injurious to the public weal;—a revival of the native dignity of the Crown, by imparting to each branch of the Legislature its distinct and proportional weight;—and the abolition of that train of courtly mercenaries who must ever continue to prey on the vitals of public virtue,
till,

till, the balance of the Constitution being restored, the necessity for governing by regular systems of seduction, shall no longer exist.

Then, would the constituent body regain its constitutional controul over its Trustees,—and venal majorities would not be found to support the most dishonourable and pernicious measures, in opposition to the sense of the unpolluted part of the Legislature, as well as contrary to the universal wishes of the public—and to the true intent of the institution of Parliaments.

With due deference for the august body which we have presumed to Address—we therefore beg leave to express our wishes that the Volunteer Delegates of Ulster would assemble with the same spirit of loyalty, patriotism, and firmness which actuated them on the memorable 15th of February, 1782 :—to deliberate on the most constitutional means of procuring A MORE EQUAL REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE IN THE PARLIAMENT OF IRELAND—as *the only measure* which can give permanency to the late renovation of our constitution, or restore that virtue to the Representative Body without which, though the mere forms of a free government may be preserved, its spirit must inevitably perish.

Signed by Order of the Meeting,

WM. SHARMAN, CHAIRMAN.

Lieut.

Lieut. Col. Sharman having left the Chair, and Lieut. Col. Sir Walter Sinnot taken it :

Resolved, That the thanks of this Meeting be given to our worthy Chairman, for his very proper conduct in the Chair.

BELFAST, July 19, 1783.

At a meeting of the Committee of Correspondence, appointed by the Representatives of Forty-five Volunteer Corps that assembled at Lisburn on the 1st inst. Present, Lieut. Col. Sharman, Major Burden, Captain Cunningham, Captain Prentice, Captain Moore, Captain Crawford, Lieut. Tomb, Mr. Robert Thompson : Lieut. Col. Sharman in the Chair. Ordered, that the following Address be published in the public Prints, and a Copy of it sent to each Corps in the Province, of which our Secretary can get information.

TO THE VOLUNTEERS OF ULSTER.

Gentlemen,

IN compliance with the order of Forty-five Corps, which appointed us a Committee of Correspondence for the purpose of promoting a Dungannon Meeting, to be held the 8th of Sep-

September next : We think it necessary to present a view of the several Volunteer Bodies who have already declared their determination to support a parliamentary reform, viz.

The PROVINCE of Munster, by a unanimous declaration of their Representatives—on the 1st of March last——

The Representatives of Thirty-eight Corps reviewed at Belfast,—on the 9th of June last, by a unanimous declaration.

The united Corps of True Blue and Society Volunteers of the City of Londonderry—on parade 30th of June, by a unanimous declaration.

The Londonderry Artillery Company, the Londonderry Independent Volunteers, and Liberty Volunteers—on parade the 1st of July, by unanimous declaration.

The Representatives of Forty-five Corps convened at Lisburn the 1st of July instant—by a unanimous declaration.

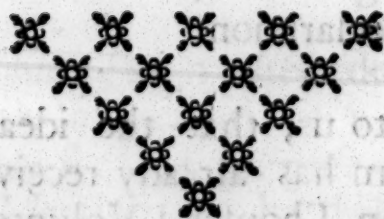
The Representatives of Thirty-four Corps reviewed at Broughshane on the 10th inst.—by a unanimous declaration.

IT appears to us, that the idea of a Parliamentary Reform has already received the sanction of Fifteen Thousand Volunteers; with a warm

warm promise of support from the great Patron of Irish Liberty—the Earl of Charlemont—and has received, in a very short time, the general approbation of all ranks and denominations of independent Freeholders.

Having given this information, it only remains at present to assure you, that we are diligently applying ourselves to the discharge of the trust reposed in us; and earnestly to request, that every Volunteer Corps in Ulster may be represented at Dungannon on the 8th of September next, and that their Delegates may be furnished with *written* instructions to declare approbation or disapprobation of the measure of a Parliamentary Reform;—leaving it to the united wisdom of the assembled Delegates, to pursue such further measures to promote this great object, as shall appear to them most proper.

WM. SHARMAN, CHAIRMAN.



LETTER from the Duke of
RICHMOND to the Committee
of Correspondence at Lisburn.

S I R;



I Have been honored with a Letter from Belfast, dated the 19th of July last, written in the Name of the Committee of Correspondence appointed by the Delegates of forty five Volunteer Corps assembled at Lisburn on the 1st of the same Month, " for taking preparatory Steps to forward " their Intentions on the Subject of a " more equal Representation of the People " in Parliament," and sign'd by their Secretary, Henry Joy, junr. Esqr.

In this Letter, after shewing the corrupt State of the Boroughs in Ireland, the general Opinion of the People that the Constitution can be restored to its ancient Purity and Vigor by *no* other Means than a Parliamentary Reform, and informing me of the Steps which have been taken and are taking by the Volunteers, in determin-
C ing

ing to procure this desirable Object, the Committee is pleased “ to request my Sentiments and Advice as to the best, most eligible and most practicable Mode of destroying, restraining, or counteracting this Hydra of Corruption, Borough Influence, in order to lay my Opinion before the Provincial Assembly of Delegates, which is to be held at Dungannon on the 8th of September next.”

This great Mark of Confidence, from Gentlemen in whom so much Trust is placed, does me great Honor; for as I have not the Pleasure of being personally known to any of them, I can owe it but to the favorable Opinion they are pleased to entertain of my constant and zealous Endeavours in the Publick Service.

I am sensible that the only proper Return I can make for this honorable Distinction, is to obey their Commands in the best Manner I am able; for altho' my Insufficiency for so arduous a Task would afford me but too good an Excuse for declining it, yet I feel it would be inconsistent with my Ideas of the Obligation every Man is under to serve the Publick as well as he can, if I was to refuse giving my Opinions, such as they are, when thus called upon by a respectable Body of Gentlemen.

Besides

Besides my Inability, I have to regret the Want of Time to collect and arrange my Thoughts in such a Manner as to be fit to appear before you, and the necessary Limits of a Letter, which will not admit of the extensive Investigation which a Subject of this vast Importance deserves; for altho' I fear I must be long, I am sensible I cannot do it Justice.

The Subject of a Parliamentary Reform is that which of all others, in my Opinion, most deserves the Attention of the Publick, as I conceive it would include every other Advantage which a Nation can wish; and I have no Hesitation in saying, that from every Consideration which I have been able to give to this great Question that for many Years has occupied my Mind, and from every Day's Experience to the present Hour, I am more and more convinced that *the restoring the Right of voting universally to every Man, not incapacitated by Nature for want of Reason, or by Law for the Commission of Crimes, together with annual Elections*, is the only Reform that can be effectual and permanent. I am further convinced that it is the only Reform that is practicable.

All other Plans that are of a palliative Nature have been found insufficient to
C 2
interest

interest and animate the great Body of the People, from whose Earnestness alone any Reform can be expected. A long Exclusion from any Share in the Legislature of their Country has rendered the great Mass of the People indifferent whether the Monopoly that subsists, continues in the Hands of a more or less extended Company ; or whether it is divided by them into Shares of somewhat more or less just Proportions. The Publick feels itself unconcerned in these Contests, except as to the Oppressions it endures, and the Exactions it suffers, which it knows must continue so long as the People remain deprived of all Controul over their Representatives. This Indifference of theirs, when the last Attempt was made for additional County Members, was used by our Opponents as an Argument against all Reform; it was asked with a triumphant Air, where are the Petitions from the Inhabitants of Birmingham, Manchester, Halifax, and other great unrepresented Towns? And their Silence was deemed a Proof of their Acquiescence and Satisfaction in the present Form of Elections ! The Truth is, that the People have been so often deceived that they will now scarcely trust any Set of Men ; and nothing but self-evident Conviction, that a Measure tends effectually to the Recovery of

of their Rights, can or indeed ought to interest them in its Favor.

The lesser Reform has been attempted with every possible Advantage in its Favor; not only from the zealous Support of the Advocates for a more effectual one, but from the Assistance of Men of great weight both in and out of Power. But with all these Temperaments and Helps it has fail'd. Not one Profelyte has been gain'd from Corruption, nor has the least Ray of Hope been held out from any Quarter that the House of Commons was inclined to adopt any other Mode of Reform. The Weight of Corruption has crush'd this more gentle, as it would have defeated any more efficacious Plan in the same Circumstances. From that Quarter therefore I have nothing to hope. It is from the People at large that I expect any Good. And I am convinced that the only Way to make them feel that they are really concerned in the Business, is to contend for their *full, clear and indisputable Rights of Universal Representation*. I call them such, not only from my own Conviction, but from the Admission of the Friends to the more moderate Plan, who in the second Address of the Yorkshire Committee to the People, confess that our Claims are founded on the true Principles

Principles of the Constitution, and only object to them on Account of Impracticability. But their Plan has now had a fair Trial, and (if it is from the Inclination of Parliament that Practicability is to be expected) has been found as impracticable as ours. The more extensive Plan, at the same Time that its Operation is more complete, depends on a more effectual Support, that of the People.

I am also persuaded that if the Scheme for additional County Members had proceeded any further, infinite Difficulties would have arisen in adjusting it. Neither the Yorkshire Committee nor Mr. Pitt have given the Detail of their Plan. A just Repartition would have been a most intricate Task, for where different Interests are separately represented, the Proportion is not very easy to ascertain. The Doubt you state concerning this Mode of Reform appears to me well founded; a few great Families might divide a County between them and chuse the Members by a House List, like East India Directors. Another Difficulty from the Increase of the Number of Members which might render the House more tumultuous than deliberative, has its weight. But the greatest Objection, in my Opinion, to this and to every other
narrow

narrow and contracted Plan of Reform, is, that it proceeds upon the same bad Principle as the Abuse it pretends to rectify; it is still partial and unequal; a vast Majority of the Community is still left unrepresented; and its most essential Concerns, Life, Liberty and Property continue in the absolute Disposal of those whom they do not chuse, and over whom they have no Controul. In the Arrangements of Plans of this Kind there is no leading Principle to determine that the Addition ought to be, one Hundred, Fifty, or Two Hundred; that the Allotment should be according to the Population, Property, or Taxes paid in each County; that any supposed Proportion between the landed and trading Interest is the just one, and that the Division of County and City Members will correspond with this Proportion when found. All is at Sea without any Compass to enable us to distinguish the safe from the dangerous Course.

But in the more liberal and great Plan of *universal Representation*, a clear and distinct Principle at once appears that cannot lead us wrong: Not Conveniency but Right: If it is not a Maxim of our Constitution, that a British Subject is to be governed only by Laws to which he has consented by himself or his Representative, we should
instantly

instantly abandon the Error; but if it is the Essential of Freedom, founded on the eternal Principles of Justice and Wisdom, and our unalienable Birth Right, we should not hesitate in asserting it. Let us then but determine to act on this broad Principle, of *giving to every Man his own*, and we shall immediately get rid of all the Perplexities to which the narrow Notions of Partiality and Exclusion must ever be subject.

In the digesting a Plan upon this Noble Foundation we shall not find any Difficulty that the most common Understanding and Pains will not easily surmount. It does not require half the Ingenuity of a common Tax Bill; and as a Proof of this Assertion I myself drew the Form of a Bill for this Purpose, which I presented to the House of Lords in 1780; not as a perfect Work, but merely to shew how easily the Objections to the Practicability of the Plan, and the Inconveniences that are suggested, might be got over.

I believe the sending you a Copy of my Bill will be the best way of explaining its Operations. I have not one ready at this Moment, but it shall soon follow this Letter.

I shall therefore only mention at present a few of its Provisions, which I think entirely remove the most plausible Objections that have been urged against it.

The present Number of Members in the House of Commons is preserved, so that all Apprehension from too numerous an Assembly, ceases.

An Account of the whole Number of Males of Age in the Kingdom is to be taken and divided by the Number of Members to be sent, which will find the Quota of Electors to chuse one Member; from the best Accounts I can now get, it will be about *Two Thousand Six Hundred*; these are to be formed into Districts or Boroughs from the most contiguous Parishes; and by having all the Elections throughout the Kingdom in one and the same Day, and taken in each Parish, all Fear of Riot and Tumult, vanishes.

The great Expence of Elections, which arises chiefly from the Cost of conveying Electors to the Place of Poll, and entertaining them there and on the Road, will be no more when every Man will vote in his own Parish. Bribery must entirely cease; in a single Borough it would be difficult,

ficult, on so many as to have any Effect, impossible. The Numbers to be bought would be infinitely too great for any Purse. Besides, annual Parliaments, by their frequency and by their shortness, would doubly operate in preventing Corruption.

The vast Expence of Petitions to Parliament on account of illegal Returns, would be reduced almost to nothing. The Points on which these Contests generally turn, are the Qualifications of the Electors under the numberless Restrictions the present Laws have imposed, which require the Attendance of Witnesses, the Production of Records, and are subject to infinite Dispute. But when no other Qualification shall be necessary but that of being a British Subject, and of Age, there can be but little left to contend upon as to the Right of Electors to vote. All other Questions that could afford Ground for a Petition would be trifling, and might be decided in one Day. Many other Objections are obviated by the Bill, but it is needless here to mention them.

But there is another Sort of Objection against which no Provision can be made, as it is merely imaginary. It is feared by some, that the Influence of Power and Riches,

Riches, will give to the Aristocracy so great a Lead in these Elections as to place the whole Government in their Hands. Others again dread, that when Paupers and the lowest Orders of the People shall have an equal Vote with the first Commoner in the Kingdom, we shall fall into all the Confusion of a democrattick Republick. The Contrariety of these two Apprehensions might of itself be a sufficient Proof that neither Extreme will take Place. It is true, that the poorest Man in the Kingdom will have an equal Vote with the first, for the Choice of the Person to whom he trusts his all; and I think he ought to have that equal Degree of Security against Oppression. It is also true, that Men of superior Fortunes, will have a superior Degree of Weight and Influence; and I think that as Education and Knowledge generally attend Property, those who possess them ought to have Weight and Influence with the more Ignorant. But the essential Difference will be, that altho' the People may be led they cannot be driven. Property will have its Weight, as it ever must have, in all Governments; and I conceive that in this Plan, it will precisely find its just Proportion combined with Talents and Character. A Man of great Property that is beloved and esteem'd, will, as he ought, have the

greatest Sway; but Tyranny and Oppression, tho' attended with Riches, may be resisted, and will no longer be attended with a Burgage Tenure at Command.

Another Subject of Apprehension is, that the Principle of allowing to every Man an equal Right to vote tends to Equality in other Respects and to level Property. To me it seems to have a direct contrary Tendency. The equal Rights of Men to Security from Oppression, and to the Enjoyments of Life and Liberty, strike me as perfectly compatible with their unequal Shares of Industry, Labour, and Genius, which are the Origin of Inequality of Fortunes. The Equality and Inequality of Men are both founded in Nature; and whilst we do not confound the two, and only support her Establishments, we cannot err. The Protection of Property appears to me one of the most essential Ends of Society; and so far from injuring it by this Plan, I conceive it to be the only Means of preserving it; for the present System is hastening with great Strides to a perfect Equality in universal Poverty.

It has been said, that this Plan of extending the Right of voting to every Individual creates much Uneasiness in the Minds of
quiet

quiet and well disposed Persons ; and that if Paupers, Vagabonds, and Persons of no Property, were left out, there would be no Objection to extend it to all Householders and Persons paying Taxes, and that the same Division into Districts might take Place. My Answer is, that I know of no Man, let him be ever so poor, who in his Consumption of Food and Use of Raiment, does not pay Taxes, and that I would wish to encourage an Enthusiasm for his Country in the Breast of every Subject, by giving him his just Share in its Government. I readily admit, that such an Alteration would be a vast Improvement ; but I must prefer the adhering rigidly to a self-evident Principle, especially when attended with no Inconvenience in the Execution, that I can foresee. Besides, we should again fall into the Difficulties of drawing the Line of Separation, and into the Disputes about Qualification.

The Apprehensions that our Government will become too Democrattick, have been urged on another Ground. It has been said, that the House of Commons has usurped the whole Power of Government : that the Crown in Reality no longer possesses its Negative, and must in all Things be ruled by the House of Commons : that
the

House of Lords, in Consequence of its Exclusion (by the Will of the House of Commons and not by Law) from interfering in Money Bills, no longer in Fact exercises the Functions of a Branch of the Legislature: that the only Means by which the Ballance of the Constitution is now in any Degree preserved, is by the *Irregular* Influence of the Crown and of the Peers in the House of Commons: and that if they are totally excluded from Inteference there, as it supposed will be the Case if this Bill passes, and are not restored to their original Share of Power, the Equilibrium will be destroyed, and the Government become purely Democratick.

To remedy this Objection, it has been answered by Others, that it is but just and reasonable, and that they mean at the same Time that the Commons are restored to their Rights, that the Crown and the Peers should recover theirs. This Answer has been ridiculed in my Opinion with more Wit, than Solidity of Argument. It has been represented as admitting that whilst the House of Commons continue corrupt, the King and Lords should submit to its Decisions; but that when it should really speak the Voice of the People, then it would be right to revive the dormant Powers of resisting it.

For-

For my Part I agree in Opinion with those who are for restoring to all Parts of the State their just Rights at the same Time; to do it generally, not partially, is what I must contend for. At the same Time, I admit that I am not for restoring the Negative of the Crown. My Reason is, that it appears to me preposterous that the Will of one Man should for ever obstruct every Regulation which all the Rest of the Nation may think necessary. I object to it, as I would to any other Prerogative of the Crown, or Privilege of the Lords, or People, that is not founded on Reason.

But I agree that if the House of Commons was reduced to its natural Dependence on the People alone, and the present System of making it the exclusive Part of Government was continued, we should approach to a pure Democracy more than our Constitution warrants, or than I wish to see. I am not for a Democrattick, any more than for an Aristocrattick, or Monarchick Government, solely; I am for that admirable Mixture of the Three, that our inimitable and comprehensive Constitution has established: I wish to see the Executive Part of Government revert to where the Constitution has originally placed it, in the Hands of the Crown to be carried
on

the House of Commons and the Election of Scotch Peers: The Regulations for restoring to the Crown its executive and to the House of Lords its deliberative Functions should be added to and form a Part of this Bill; but I have not as yet had Time and Leisure to prepare them.

In what I have said, I have shewn my Opinion concerning the 1st, 3d, 4th, 6th and 8th Questions you have proposed to me. There remains the 2d, 5th and 7th to be considered.

In Respect to the Second, which I presume relates to the Admission of Roman Catholicks to vote at Elections, I can only say that the same Principles which go to civil Liberty, equally lead to Liberty of Conscience: I admire with you the glorious Spirit of Toleration which you say has united the once distracted Inhabitants of Ireland into one indissoluble Mass: And I am sure that nothing short of evident Danger to the State can warrant its Interference in religious Opinions. But unacquainted as I am with the State of Ireland, it is impossible for me to know the present Temper and Disposition of the Roman Catholicks there, and those only who are
on

on the Spot can judge how far Exclusions of this Sort are necessary, or ought to extend.

With Regard to the 5th Question, if voting by Ballot is adviseable? I am clearly of Opinion that it is not. The Idea of a Ballot can have arisen but to avoid the Effect of some improper Influence; and I conceive it much more noble, directly to check that Influence, than indirectly to evade it by Concealment and Deceit. I am convinced that trivial Circumstances in things like this tend greatly to form the national Character; and that it is most consistent with that of a British or Irish Freeman, that all his Actions should be open and avowed, and that he should not be ashamed of declaring in the Face of his Country whom he wishes to intrust with its Interests. Upon the same Idea that Ballots may be a Cover for Independance, they must also be a Cloak for Bribery and a School for Lying and Deceit.

As to the 7th Question, whether it would not be equitable or expedient that Boroughs now in the Possession of Individuals should be purchased by the Nation? I think that altho' no Man can have a strict

Claim in Equity to be refunded the Loss of what neither Buyer nor Seller had a Right to barter, yet it will be wise to purchase the Good Will, or at least to soften the Resistance, of the present powerful Possessors of Boroughs by a most ample Compensation. The Liberties of a Nation cannot be bought too dear, but the whole Cost of these Boroughs would not amount to the Profits of one Jobbing Contract.

I have now answered all the Questions you have been pleased to propose ; but I must mention another Advantage which ought to recommend the Measures you are pursuing to every Friend to the internal Peace and Quiet of the Kingdom, which is, that when the People have obtained a regular, legal, and speedy Way of giving Effect to their Sentiments, there can no longer be any Apprehension of their endeavouring to redress themselves by Mobs and Tumults ; and even such regular and well-conducted Meetings as yours will become needless. I mention this Circumstance with the more Satisfaction, as it stamps your Conduct with the most unequivocal Marks of disinterested Patriotism. Power, when once acquired, is generally endeavoured to be preserved by its Possessors.

Possessors ; but you after having taken up
 yours from Necessity, and employed it use-
 fully, are now endeavouring with unexam-
 pled Virtue to render its Continuance un-
 necessary. For great as your Services have
 been, in so soon forming a compleat Army,
 in the Advantages you have procured for
 your Country, in the good Order you have
 preserved, and in the Efficacy you have
 given to Law, you will derive still greater
 Credit, in my Opinion, from your good
 Sense in seeing that a great Military Force
 totally unconnected with the Civil Govern-
 ment cannot be a permanent Establish-
 ment in a free Country, whose first Prin-
 ciple is never to trust absolute Power in
 any Hands whatever. Your present En-
 deavours to restore the Constitution to its
 Purity and Vigor evidently tend to make
 this and every extraordinary Institution
 unnecessary ; for when the People are fair-
 ly and equally represented in Parliament,
 when they have annual Opportunities of
 changing their Deputies, and thro' them
 of controuling every Abuse of Govern-
 ment in a safe easy and legal Way, there
 can be no longer any Reason for recurring
 to those ever dangerous tho' sometimes
 necessary Expedients of an armed Force,
 which nothing but a bad Government can
 justify

justify. Such a magnanimous End to your Proceedings, when after having restored Liberty Commerce and Free Government to your Country, you shall voluntarily retire to the noble Character of private Citizens, peaceably enjoying the Blessings you have procured, will crown your Labours with everlasting Glory and is worthy the genuine Patriotick Spirit which animates the Irish Volunteers.

Before I conclude, I beg Leave to express a Wish that the mutually essential Connection between Great Britain and Ireland may soon be settled on some liberal and fair Footing. That which did subsist was on such narrow and absurd Principles that no Friend to either Kingdom can regret its Loss; founded on Constraint and Dependence, incompatible with the Condition of Freemen, Ireland had an indisputable Right to dissolve it whenever she chose so to do. But surely, if we do not mean a total Separation, it would be right to agree upon some new Terms by which we are to continue connected. I have always thought it for the Interest of the two Islands to be incorporated and form one and the same Kingdom, with the same Legislature meeting sometimes in Ireland as well

well as in England : But if there are Difficulties to such an Union not to be got over at present, some sort of *fæderal Union* at least between the two Kingdoms seems necessary to ascertain the many Circumstances that concern their joint Interests ; and an Union of this Sort may now be formed with much greater Propriety than before, as it will be sanctified by the free Consent of Independent Nations.

I do conceive that some Step of this Sort is absolutely necessary, because the present Footing, of Separation rather than Union, is too unfair to be able long to subsist. England, besides the Load of the whole Debt contracted for the Use of both Kingdoms, bears all the Burdens of naval Defence and foreign Negotiations, and by far more than its Proportion of the Land Service in Time of War. But what is worse, is that there is no Certainty now left that we shall have the same Enemies and the same Friends : Different Interests, as they may appear, may lead one Kingdom to think a War necessary, and the other to remain in Peace : The same King, in his different Kingdoms, may think it wise to follow the Advice of his respective Parliaments : I need scarcely add that the
unavoidable

unavoidable Consequences of such a Difference are a *War* between the two Kingdoms. Unless some Settlement takes Place upon these and many other important Subjects, I am far from being clear that it will be for the Advantage of Liberty in either Kingdom that its Monarch should continue the Sovereign of a neighbouring State with which it has no Connection. I am sensible that there are great Difficulties attending the Adjustment of such an Union, and that it requires great Wisdom and Temper to form it, especially on the Part of Ireland which must feel that she ought to give the Preponderance to Great Britain; but I am sure the Business ought not to be neglected, and that every true Friend to both Kingdoms ought to give it his most zealous Assistance.

I beg Pardon for having gone into a Subject not immediately belonging to that upon which you have desired my Opinion, but I thought it so connected with it, and at the same Time so important, that I trust you will excuse my having introduced it. I fear I have been very long, but it was impossible for me to compress so much Matter into a less Compass, and when you wished to have my Opinion I thought it best





A BILL ENTITLED

An ACT

for declaring and restoring the natural, unalienable, and equal Right of ALL the Commons of Great Britain (Infants, Persons of insane Mind, and Criminals incapacitated by Law, only excepted) to vote in the Election of their Representatives in Parliament: For regulating the Manner of such Elections: For restoring annual Parliaments: For giving an Hereditary Seat to the sixteen Peers which shall be elected for Scotland: And for establishing more equitable Regulations concerning the Peerage of Scotland.

WHEREAS the Life, Liberty, and Property, of every Man is or may be affected by the Law of the Land in which he lives, and every Man is bound to pay Obedience to the same.

And whereas, by the Constitution of this Kingdom, the Right of making Laws is vested in the three Estates of King, Lords, and Commons, in Parliament assembled, and the Consent of all the three said Estates, comprehending the whole Community,

nity, is necessary to make Laws which bind the whole Community.

And whereas the House of Commons represents all the Commons of the Realm, and the Consent of the House of Commons binds the Consent of all the Commons of the Realm, in all Cases on which the Legislature is competent to decide.

And whereas no Man is, or can be, actually represented who hath not a Vote in the Election of his Representative.

And whereas it is the Right of every Commoner of this Realm (Infants, Persons of insane Mind, and Criminals incapacitated by Law, only excepted) to have a Vote in the Election of the Representative who is to give his Consent to the making of Laws by which he is to be bound.

And whereas the Number of Persons who are suffered to vote for electing the Members of the House of Commons do not at this Time amount to *one sixth* Part of the whole Commons of this Realm, whereby far the greater Part of the said Commons are deprived of their Right to elect their Representatives; and the Consent
of

of the Majority of the whole Community to the passing of Laws is given by Persons whom they have not delegated for such Purpose; and the Majority of the said Community are governed by Laws made by a very small Part of the said Community, and to which the said Majority have not in fact consented by themselves or by their Representatives.

And whereas the State of Election of Members of the House of Commons hath in Process of Time so grossly deviated from its simple and natural Principle of Representation and Equality, that in several Places the Members are returned by the Property of *one Man*; that the smallest Boroughs send as many Members as the largest Counties; and that a Majority of the Representatives of the whole Nation are chosen by a Number of Voters not exceeding *twelve Thousand*.

Now for Remedy of such partial and unequal Representation and of the many Mischiefs which have arisen therefrom; and for restoring, asserting and maintaining the *Rights* of the Commons of this Realm, Be it declared and enacted, and it is hereby declared and enacted by the King's most excellent Majesty by and with

the Advice and Consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal and Commons in this present Parliament assembled and by the Authority of the same, *That every Commoner of this Realm* (excepting only Infants, Persons of insane Mind, and Criminals incapacitated by Law) *hath a natural unalienable and equal Right to vote in the Election of his Representative in Parliament.*

And whereas it was accorded by Statute in the fourth Year of the Reign of King Edward the Third “ that a Parliament “ should be holden every Year once and “ more often if need be ; ” which Statute was confirmed by another Statute passed in the 36th Year of the Reign of the said King Edward the Third : And the Practice in ancient Times was for Writs to issue for the Election of a New Parliament every Year.

And whereas frequent Elections are indispensably necessary to enable the Commons to alter and amend the Choice of their Representatives as they may see Occasion ; and such Elections ought to be as frequent as may be, consistent with the Use of a representative Body ; and the ancient Practice of annual Elections is well calculated for such Purpose.

And

And whereas Triennial and Septennial Parliaments by rendering the Exercise of the Right of Election less frequent tend to make the Representatives less dependent on their Constituents than they always ought to be ; and also deprive the Commons for many Years after they come of Age of their Franchise of electing their own Representatives : Be it declared and enacted by the Authority aforesaid *that the Election of Members to serve in the House of Commons ought to be annual.*

And whereas, in order to reform the manifold Abuses which in Process of Time have been suffered to take Root in the Manner of electing the Representatives of the Commons, and in order to establish a free, true, and equal Representation of all the People, it is necessary that all the Laws respecting the Election of Members of Parliament not applicable to the present intended Reform should be repealed and annulled, and that the Manner of electing the Commons in Parliament and all Matters and Things respecting the same be new modelled according to the present State of the Kingdom and to the ancient and unalienable Rights of the People : Be it enacted by the Authority aforesaid that all future Elections for Representatives

tives of the Commons of Great Britain in Parliament shall be made according to the Provisions and Regulations of this Act, and not otherwise ; and that all other Acts, Laws, Customs and Usages contrary thereto, or such Parts of them as are inconsistent therewith, shall be, and the same are hereby repealed, annulled, and made void to all Intents and Purposes whatsoever.

And be it further enacted that the Number of Members to sit in the House of Commons shall remain and be the same as at present and shall consist of *five Hundred and fifty eight Members.*

And whereas the due Proportion of Commoners to elect each Member of Parliament can be properly determined but from a Knowledge of the whole Number of Commoners in the Kingdom having a Right to vote : Be it enacted, that in order to ascertain the same, this Act shall forthwith be transmitted by one of His Majesty's principal Secretaries of State to the Minister of each Parish, and likewise to each acting Justice of the Peace, in Great Britain : And each of the said Ministers shall read, or cause to be read, the said Act in his Parish Church immediately after divine Service and before the Sermon every
Sunday

Sunday in the Month of November next: And each of the said Justices of the Peace within their respective Districts shall diligently enquire on every Sunday in the said Month of November next whether the several Ministers have read this Act accordingly; and if it shall be found that any Minister shall have neglected so to do, the Justice of the Peace finding such Neglect shall cause this Act to be read by some other Person on the next Sunday in such Parish Church in Manner aforesaid.

And be it further enacted, that on the First of December next the Minister of each Parish together with the Church Wardens and Overseers of the Poor shall hold a Vestry at the Church in the said Parish, which shall open at eight o'Clock in the Forenoon and shall close at Six o'Clock in the Afternoon of the same Day, at which all Persons, not belonging to the Royal Navy or serving in the embodied Militia or Army, and being on that Day in the said Parish, shall have Liberty to attend. And the said Minister Church Wardens and Overseers shall make out a true and correct List of the Christian and Surname, Trade, Occupation, Age, and usual Place of Dwelling, of all the Men of the Age of 21 Years and upwards, who
on

on that Day shall be in their respective Parishes, and who shall appear and claim a Right to vote for the Election of Members of Parliament, and shall subscribe and take the following Oath before the said Ministers Church Wardens and Overseers who are hereby enabled and required to administer the same, viz. “ I A. B. do
 “ swear, that I am a natural born Subject
 “ of Great Britain, that I am of the
 “ Age of twenty-one Years, that I am
 “ not serving in the embodied Militia,
 “ nor belonging to the Royal Navy or
 “ Army, and that I have not this Day
 “ been to claim my Right of voting for
 “ the Election of a Member of Parlia-
 “ ment, or have been sworn for the same
 “ before, in this or any other Parish or
 “ Place, so help me God.” And such Lists so made out shall be certified, under the Signature and Seal of the said Minister, and of each of the Church Wardens and Overseers who shall attend such Vestry, to be a true and correct List; and a Copy of the same shall be taken and preserved by such Minister and by each of the said Church Wardens and Overseers; and such original List together with all the Copies of the same shall on the 15th Day of December next be carried by such Minister Church Wardens and Overseers to the
 Justices

Justices of the Peace who are hereby required to hold Petty Sessions on that Day within their respective Divisions; and such Lists and Copies shall then and there be sworn to as true and correct before such Justices of the Peace by such Minister Church Wardens and Overseers; and their respective Affidavits shall be certified on the said List by such Justices of the Peace. And such original List, so sworn to, shall by such Justices of the Peace be transmitted to the Clerk of the Peace of their respective Counties, or to the Town Clerk in Cities which are Counties of themselves, so that such Clerk of the Peace or Town Clerk may receive them on or before the first of January next. And the said Clerks of the Peace and Town Clerks shall transmit the said Lists to one of His Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State, so that he may receive them on or before the 20th of January next. And one of the said Secretaries of State shall forthwith send the said Lists to the twelve Judges, who shall meet in the Exchequer Chamber on the 21st of January next for the Purpose of receiving such Lists.

And be it enacted, that the said twelve Judges, then and there assembled, shall divide the total Number of Persons so re-

G

turned

turned by the Number Five Hundred fifty eight, being the Number of Members to be chosen; and the Quotient found shall be adjudged to be the Number of Persons having a Right to elect one Member of Parliament. And the said Judges shall then proceed to compute from the said Lists the Number of Persons who have a Right to vote in each County, or City being a County of itself, in Great Britain; and shall determine the Number of Members to be elected by each County, or City being a County of itself, in Proportion (or as near as may be) to such Number of Electors in each County or City, giving the Advantage to the smaller Counties or Cities where the Numbers will not admit of exact Division. And the said Judges, having so determined the Number of Members to be returned by each County and City being a County of itself, and the Number of Electors to chuse one Member, shall, on or before the 1st of February next, transmit an Account thereof to the Lord High Chancellor of England.

And be it enacted, that the said Lord High Chancellor shall, within four Days after receiving such Account, issue his Writ to the High Sheriff of each County, and to the Chief Magistrate in each City which is a County of itself, in Great Britain,

Britain, directing him to summon a Grand Jury consisting of all such Persons then living as have been heretofore summoned on Grand Juries at the Assizes in his County, to meet at Eight o'Clock in the Forenoon, on the 10th of March next, at the usual Place of holding the Summer Assizes for his County; and likewise the Minister Church Wardens and Overseers of each Parish within his County to attend the said Grand Jury. And the said Chancellor shall transmit to the said High Sheriff and chief Magistrate an Account of the Number of Members to be returned by his County, and of the Number of Electors to chuse one Member; which Account the said Sheriff and Chief Magistrate shall deliver, or cause to be delivered, to the said Grand Jury when assembled.

And be it enacted, that on the 10th of March next the said High Sheriff of each County and Chief Magistrate of each City which is a County of itself in Great Britain shall attend, and be Foreman of, the said Grand Jury; or in Case of unavoidable Absence another Person shall be chosen as Foreman by the said Grand Jury. And such Foreman is hereby authorized and required, first to take, and then to administer to every Person summoned and

who shall attend the said Grand Jury, the following Oath: " I A. B. do swear
 " that in the Allotment of the several
 " Parishes, or Parts of Parishes, into
 " Districts for the Election of Members
 " of Parliament within this County, I will
 " act according to the best of my Judg-
 " ment and Discretion, fairly and equally
 " and for the Conveniency of the said Dis-
 " tricts, so help me God." And the said
 Grand Jury shall then proceed to distribute
 into Districts the several Parishes of their
 County. And each District shall consist (as
 nearly as may be) of such Number of Per-
 sons, having a Right to vote, as are allotted
 to chuse one Member of Parliament accord-
 ing to the Lists made out in such Parishes,
 which will appear by the Duplicates preser-
 ved by the Ministers Church Wardens and
 Overseers, who are hereby required to attend
 such Grand Jury with such Duplicates. And
 where Parishes shall be greatly too large or
 too small to form Districts of themselves,
 such Parishes may be divided, or join-
 ed either in whole or in Part with other
 contiguous Parishes, for the Purpose of form-
 ing Districts as aforesaid, according to the
 Judgment and Discretion of the said Grand
 Jury. And the said Grand Jury having
 so divided their County into Districts, the
 same shall be adjudged to be and be called
Boroughs;

Boroughs: And the said Grand Jury shall affix to each Borough the Name of the principal Parish in such Borough. And the said Foreman shall return into the Court of Chancery, so that it may arrive there on or before the 1st of April next, a List of such Boroughs within his County, certified under the Hands and Seals of the said Foreman and of all the Members who attended the said Grand Jury. And such Certificate shall be in the following Form :

“ We, whose Names are hereunto sub-
 “ scribed and Seals affixed, the Fore-
 “ man and Grand Jury of the County
 “ of assembled on the 10th of
 “ March 178 in Pursuance of an Act
 “ passed in the Year of His present
 “ Majesty's Reign entitled an Act, &c.
 “ do certify that the above Distribution
 “ is an equal Division of the said County
 “ into Districts as directed by the said
 “ Act, or as nearly so as the Circumstan-
 “ ces of this County would admit.”

And be it enacted, That each of the said Boroughs in Great Britain shall be entitled in all future Elections to elect one Member to serve in the Commons House of Parliament, and no more. And each Member so elected shall be called a Burgess. And the said Burgesses shall constitute

stitute and form the House of Commons of Great Britain. And no County City or Borough (other than is directed by this Act) shall in future be entitled to send any Knight, Citizen or Burgeſſs to Parliament.

And be it enacted, that the Lord High Chancellor, having received the Returns herein before directed to be made to him by the ſaid Foremen of Grand Juries, ſhall, on or before the 15th of April next, iſſue his Writ to the High Sheriff of each County, and to the chief Magiſtrate of each City being a County of itſelf in Great Britain, for the Election of one Member to ſerve in Parliament for each of the ſeveral Boroughs within his County or City: And the Form of the ſaid Writs ſhall be ſuch as is annexed to this Act. And the ſaid High Sheriff and chief Magiſtrate ſhall, within four Days after the Receipt of the ſaid Writ, iſſue his Precept to the Head Conſtable or Senior Peace Officer, for the Time being, of each Borough within his County or City (who is hereby appointed Returning Officer of ſuch Borough) for the Election of one Member to ſerve in Parliament for the ſaid Borough; and the Form of the ſaid Precept ſhall be ſuch as is annexed to this Act.

And

And be it enacted, that the Returning Officer of each Borough shall on the 15th of May next cause Proclamation to be made in each Parish within his Borough that the Day fixed for chusing a New Parliament is the first of September following; and that every Person, intending to offer himself as a Candidate for the said Borough, and duly qualified by Law, is to send to him the said Returning Officer a Declaration in Writing, signed by such Person, of his being a Candidate to represent the said Borough; so that he the said Returning Officer may receive the same on or before the 15th of June next. And the said Returning Officer shall, on the 16th of June next, cause the said Declaration or Declarations to be proclaimed in every Parish within his Borough, and a Copy thereof attested under his Signature to be affixed on the Door of the Church of every Parish within his Borough; or in Case he shall not have received any such Declaration he shall make Proclamation that there are no Candidates for the said Borough. And it shall and may be lawful for the Inhabitants of such Borough to assemble in their respective Parishes on the 17th of June next to consider of the Candidates (if any) who

who offer, and to declare any other Candidate or Candidates they may think proper, by Writing addressed to the Returning Officer and signed by not less than one Hundred of the said Inhabitants ; provided such Declaration be delivered to the said Returning Officer before Six o'Clock in the Evening on the said 17th Day of June next, and that the Qualification of such Candidate or Candidates to sit in Parliament be situate within the said Borough. And the said Returning Officer shall, on the 18th of June next, cause a List of all such Candidates, distinguishing those who offer themselves from those who are set up by the Inhabitants, to be proclaimed in every Parish within his Borough and likewise a Copy of such List attested under his Signature to be affixed on the Door of the Church of every Parish within his Borough. And the said Returning Officer shall, on the said 18th of June next, transmit by the Post to one of His Majesty's principal Secretaries of State a List of such Candidates. And one of the said Secretaries of State shall cause the same to be inserted in the Gazette on or before the 15th of July next : And no other Person shall thereafter become a Candidate for such Borough at such Election.

And

And be it enacted, that every Person who shall be so declared by one Hundred of the Inhabitants of any Parish to be a Candidate for the Borough in which such Parish is situate, and whose Qualification shall at the Time of such Declaration be situate within the said Borough, shall, if chosen, be compellable to attend Parliament like other Members. Provided always that no Person having served for one Parliament shall be compellable to serve again.

And be it enacted, that the Senior Peace Officer for the Time being of each Parish shall act as Deputy to the Returning Officer of the Borough in which such Parish is situate, and shall in all Things respecting this Act pay due Obedience to such Directions as he shall receive from the Returning Officer, and previously to his acting as his Deputy shall take the following Oath before the said Returning Officer, "I A.B. " will faithfully and honestly discharge " my Duty as Deputy to the Returning " Officer of the Borough of " in the Election of a Member of Parlia- " ment, so help me God," which Oath the said Returning Officer is hereby authorized and required to administer.

H

And

And be it enacted, that on the First of September next the Senior Peace Officer in each Parish throughout the Kingdom of Great Britain shall make Proclamation at 8 o'Clock in the Forenoon, at the Church of the said Parish, that he is immediately proceeding to the Election of a Member to serve in Parliament for the Borough in which such Parish is situate; and that such Election will close at Six o'Clock on the same Evening. And such Senior Peace Officer shall then declare the Names of such Persons as are legal Candidates for such Borough, and read or cause to be read the Clauses in this Act which inflict Penalties on Persons who shall be found guilty of Perjury, Bribery, Corruption, or other Offences against this Act, and which incapacitate Persons convicted of certain Crimes from being elected, or from voting for the Election of, a Member of Parliament. And the said Senior Peace Officer shall then proceed to collect the Votes, by taking a Poll in such Manner as is herein after directed, of all such Men as shall on that Day be in the said Parish and shall offer themselves to vote. And such Poll shall continue open until Six o'Clock in the Afternoon of the same Day and no longer. And every

every Man offering himself to vote, shall give an Account of his Christian Name, Surname, Trade or Occupation, and usual and last Place of Abode, and shall sign his Name or make his Mark opposite to an Entry thereof which shall be made in a Book to be provided by the Senior Peace Officer for such Purpose. And every Man offering himself to vote shall take the following Oath, which the said Officer is hereby authorized and required to administer. " I A. B. do swear that I am a
 " natural Born Subject of Great Britain,
 " that I am twenty-one Years of Age, that
 " I have not on this Day voted before in
 " this Parish or in any other Parish or
 " Place for the Election of a Member
 " of Parliament; that I am not an Officer,
 " non-Commissioned Officer, Warrant-
 " Officer, Drummer or private Man in
 " the embodied Militia, Navy, or Army;
 " and that my Christian Name, Surname,
 " Trade, Occupation, and usual and last
 " Place of abode is such as by me now de-
 " clared, so help me God." And every Man offering himself to vote shall further take such Oath or Oaths as are, or may be, enacted against Bribery and Corruption. And every Man whatever (not of insane Mind or a Criminal incapacitated by Law) offering himself to vote in any Parish,

who shall have given an Account of himself as aforesaid, and shall have taken the aforesaid Oaths, shall be admitted to Vote at such Election for such legal Candidate as he shall think fit.

And be it enacted, that in Case the said Senior Peace Officer shall have cause to suspect that any Person voting at such Election is not entitled so to vote according to the true Intent and Meaning of this Act, or shall be requested by any of the Candidates or by any of their Agents to place a Quere opposite to the Name of any Voter, such Officer shall enter in the Poll Book a Quere opposite to the Name of such Voter with the Reason of such Quere, but shall not refuse to take the Vote of any Man who shall have signed the Book and taken the Oaths aforesaid; and the Validity of such queried Vote shall afterwards be determined, upon Petition, by the Committee of the House of Commons to which such Election shall be referred. And such Peace Officer shall on the Day next after the Election deliver to the Returning Officer of his Borough the Poll Book so taken. And the Senior Peace Officer of every Parish shall provide a sufficient Number of Clerks to aid and assist him in taking the said Poll. And the Justices of the Peace in their Quarter Sessions, to be held

held next after such Expence for the Hire of the said Clerks and the Purchase of the said Books shall have been incurred, shall allow the same, or so much as they shall deem reasonable; and such Expences so allowed shall be paid by the Treasurer of the County out of the County Rates.

And whereas Men serving as Officers, Non - Commissioned Officers, Warrant Officers, Drummers or Private Men in the embodied Militia, Navy or Army, may at the Time of Election be assembled together in large Bodies in Places distant from their respective Parishes, and if suffered to vote like other Subjects for whatever Borough they may chuse, might combine together under improper Influence and vote in Bodies, and thereby decide the Election in Places to which they do not belong, and where they have no Connexion, to the Prejudice of the Inhabitants of such Places and of the Kingdom at large: And whereas it would be unjust that Men who expose their Lives for the Defence of their Country should be deprived of those essential Rights which are by this Act restored to every Subject, Be it enacted for the Preservation of such Rights, and for the Prevention of such Inconveniences, that every Officer, Non-Commissioned

Commissioned Officer, Warrant Officer, Drummer, and Private Man in the Embodied Militia, Navy or Army shall be entitled to vote for the Election of a Member to represent him in Parliament in the Manner herein after directed and not otherwise.

And be it enacted, that every Officer, Non-Commissioned Officer, Warrant Officer, Drummer and Private Man in the Navy or Army, and every Officer, Non-Commissioned Officer and Drummer of Militia when embodied, shall (if he shall so think fit) as soon as he shall arrive, or be, in any Port or Place within this Kingdom, go before and be examined upon Oath by a Justice of the Peace touching the Place, of his last Settlement if in England, or of his Birth if in Scotland; and such Justice of the Peace shall for the Purpose of this Act adjudge the same accordingly, and give a Certificate of such Adjudication to the Commanding Officer of the Ship or Corps to which such Man belongs; and when any Man shall enter, or enlist, or receive a Commission in the Militia, Navy or Army, a similar Proceeding in respect to such Man shall be had if required; and the said Commanding Officer shall from Time to Time, within 8 Days after the Receipt of any such

such Certificate from a Justice of the Peace transmit the same to the Office of Admiralty or War Office, And such Certificate shall be filed and kept in the said Office as Matter of Record. And the Board of Admiralty or Secretary at War shall, within one Month after the Receipt of such Certificate, cause a Copy thereof attested by the Secretary or Chief Clerk of the said Office to be transmitted to the Parish to which such Man is adjudged to belong: And in Case any Man shall be removed or drafted from one Ship or Corps to another, an Account of such Removal shall in like Manner be certified to such Parish: And all such Certificates so transmitted to such Parish shall be preserved in a Chest in the Church of such Parish.

And be it further enacted, That every Officer, Non-Commissioned Officer, Warrant Officer, Drummer, or Private Man, in the Navy or Army, shall be entitled to vote for the Election of a Member of Parliament only for the Borough in which the Parish to which he has been so adjudged to belong is situate: And every Officer serving in the Militia, who shall have delivered in to the Clerk of the Peace his Qualification, shall, during

ring the Time he is embodied, be entitled to vote for the Election of a Member of Parliament only in such Borough where such Qualification, or the greater Part thereof, is situate: And every other Officer, Non-Commissioned Officer and Drummer of Militia shall during the Time he is embodied, be entitled to vote for the Election of a Member of Parliament only in such Borough in which the Parish he shall have been so adjudged to belong is situate: And every Private Militia Man, while he is embodied, shall be entitled to vote for the Election of a Member of Parliament only for the Borough in which the Parish he shall then be serving for is situate. And the Clerk of the Peace in each County where the Militia is or shall be raised shall on the First of August next make out a Certificate of the Qualification delivered to him of each Officer who shall then be serving in the embodied Militia, and shall sign and transmit the same to the Senior Peace Officer of the Parish in which the said Qualification, or the major Part thereof, is situate.

And be it enacted, that as soon as the List of Candidates shall appear in the Gazette, every Officer, Non-Commissioned Officer

Officer, Warrant Officer, Drummer and Private Man in the Embodied Militia, Navy, or Army, who shall at that Time be residing in Great Britain, or be in any Port within the Kingdom, shall, within twenty-six Days after the said Publication in the Gazette (that is, on or before the 10th of August next) have a Right to go before a Justice of the Peace, and give his Vote in Favor of any Person who is a legal Candidate for such Borough as he is entitled to vote. And the said Justice of the Peace shall read to such Person a List of the Candidates for the Borough for which he shall claim a Right to vote, as published in the Gazette; and also the Clauses in this Act which inflict Penalties on Persons who shall be found guilty of Perjury, Bribery, Corruption, or other Offences against this Act, and which incapacitate Persons convicted of certain Crimes from being elected, or from voting for the Election of, a Member of Parliament; and shall likewise administer to such Persons the following Oath: “ I A. B. do swear that I
 “ am a natural born Subject of Great Bri-
 “ tain, that I am twenty-one Years of
 “ Age, that I am an Officer, Non-Com-
 “ missioned Officer, Warrant Officer,
 “ Drummer, or Private Man in the em-
 “ bodied Militia, Navy or Army (*as the*
 I “ *Case*

“ *Case may be, specifying the Ship or*
 “ *Corps to which such Person belongs*) and
 “ that I have not before voted for any o-
 “ ther Place than that for which I now
 “ claim a Right to vote.” And likewise
 such Oath or Oaths as are, or shall be, en-
 acted against Bribery and Corruption :
 And such Justice of the Peace shall then
 take an Account of the Name, Rank, and
 Corps, of such Person, and of the Candi-
 date for whom he shall vote ; which Ac-
 count shall be subscribed and sworn to by
 such Person, and certified by such Justice
 of the Peace, who shall by the next Post
 transmit the same to the Returning Of-
 ficer of the Borough for which such Per-
 son shall vote, such Person paying to the
 Clerk of the said Justice of the Peace one
 Shilling for the same, and no more. And
 the Returning Officers of the several Bo-
 roughs shall not be chargeable with any
 Duty of Postage for Letters containing
 such Certificates.

And be it enacted, that one his Majes-
 ty's principal Secretaries of State shall cause
 the Gazette or Gazettes, containing the said
List of Candidates, to be transmitted, as
 soon as published, to every acting Justice
 of the Peace within the Kingdom.

Provided

Provided always that nothing in this Act contained shall deprive or be construed to deprive any Person belonging to the Militia, when disembodied, from voting in such Borough as he shall think fit, in the same Manner as all other Commoners are by this Act enabled to do.

And be it enacted, that the said Returning Officer shall immediately after having received the Poll Books, proceed, with the Assistance of the Peace Officers who have taken the Poll Books, to examine the said Poll Books, together with such Certificates as shall have been made to such Returning Officer from Justices of the Peace of the Votes given by Persons in the embodied Militia, Navy, and Army, for his Borough; and shall compare such Certificates of Votes with the Certificates before transmitted from the Admiralty, or War Office, of the Adjudications respecting such Right of voting; and with the Certificates of the Clerks of the Peace concerning the Qualification of Officers of Militia: And such of the said Votes as shall appear to the said Returning Officer to be legal Votes, shall be by him admitted as such: And such Returning Officer shall, within three Days after the Election, declare that Candidate to be duly elected who shall ap-

pear from the Poll Books, and from the Certificate Votes, to have the greatest Number of legal Votes in his Favor, admitting such as are queried. And the several Returning Officers shall, immediately after having made such Declaration, make their Returns to the Precepts from their respective High Sheriffs. And the respective High Sheriffs shall, immediately after receiving such Returns from the Returning Officers, make their Returns to the Writs from the Lord High Chancellor. And the Lord High Chancellor shall cause a List of the Names of the Members who are returned for the respective Boroughs, to be published in the Gazette, on or before the First of October next.

And be it enacted, that it shall be lawful for every Commoner (possessing a landed Qualification as by Law directed) to offer himself as a Candidate for any Borough within the Kingdom, and for as many Boroughs as he shall think proper ; and if any Candidate is returned a Member for more than one Borough, such Member shall, within fourteen Days after the List of Members returned shall have been published in the Gazette, make his Option in Writing, directed to the Lord High Chancellor of England, of the Place for which
he

he chuses to serve. And the Lord High Chancellor shall forthwith issue a new Writ for a new Election for that Borough, or those Boroughs, for which such Member hath not made his Option to serve. And in Case any Vacancy shall happen for any Borough previous to the Election of a Speaker of the House of Commons, the Lord High Chancellor shall issue his Writ for filling up such Vacancy; and in Case any Vacancy shall happen for any Borough after a Speaker is chosen, the Speaker shall issue his Warrant for filling up such Vacancy.

And be it enacted, that when any Vacancy for a Borough is to be filled up, such Persons only as by the Poll Books or Certificates shall appear to have actually voted at the last General Election in or for the Borough where such Vacancy shall happen, shall have a Right to vote at the Election occasioned by such Vacancy.

And be it enacted, that the House of Commons, so chosen, shall meet every Year, when summoned by His Majesty's Proclamation for the Dispatch of Business: That all Petitions concerning undue Returns shall be presented the first Day of the Sessions: That the House
of

of Commons, immediately after swearing their Members, shall proceed to chuse Committees, as by Law directed, to decide Elections against which Petitions shall have been presented: That no other Business shall be proceeded on until all the said controverted Elections shall be decided: That several Committees may proceed at the same Time on different Elections: That the House shall sit and be called over every Day until Committees for all contested Elections shall be formed: That no Committee shall be allowed to sit longer than three Days for the Determination of any one Election: That no Council for any of the Parties shall be allowed to speak after the first Day: And that the Witnesses shall be examined by the Committee and not by the Council.

And be it declared and enacted by the Authority aforesaid, that the House of Commons, so elected, shall be taken and reputed to be the only true Representatives of all the Commons of Great Britain, and shall, by the Consent of the said Representatives, or by the Majority of them, bind the Consent of all the Commons of Great Britain, in all Matters and Things on which the said House of Commons is competent to decide, and to the

the passing of all such Laws as Parliament hath a Right to enact.

And be it further enacted, that the House of Commons, so chosen, shall continue, and be, the Representatives of the Commons of Great Britain for one Year only, and no longer; to be computed from the first Day of September on which such Election shall have taken Place. And that on the first Day of September in every Year, for ever after, (or on the second of September when the First shall fall on a Sunday) all the Commons of Great Britain (excepting only Minors, Persons of insane Mind, and Criminals incapacitated by Law) shall proceed to the Election of new Burgeses, in the same Manner and Form, as is herein before directed to be observed for the Election of Burgeses for the Year next ensuing.

And whereas the Oaths, which by this Act are directed to be taken, for preventing the Admission of illegal Votes, may not be a sufficient Guard against the same, unless the Breach of such Oaths be attended with Punishments adequate to such Offences, Be it enacted, that in Case any Person shall be duly convicted of Wilful Perjury, in falsely taking any of the Oaths prescribed

scribed by this Act, every such Person shall be committed to the Common Goal of the County where such Offence shall have been committed, there to remain without Bail or Mainprize for the Space of three Years, and be incapable of ever voting again in any Borough for the Election of a Member of Parliament. Provided always that every Prosecution for such Offence shall be commenced within twelve Calendar Months next after the same shall have been committed, and not afterwards.

And be it enacted, that no Person who has been, or shall be, duly convicted in a Court of Law within this Realm of the Crimes of High Treason, Treason, Murder, Felony, Perjury, Forgery, Grand or Petty Larceny, or any of them, shall be capable of being elected, or of voting for the Election of, a Member of Parliament in or for any Borough within this Kingdom.

And be it further enacted, that if any Person herein directed to perform or do any Matter or Thing relative to the carrying this Act into Execution, shall neglect, or refuse, to pay due Obedience thereto, in such Manner, and at such Times, as is and are herein prescribed, every Person so offending

offending shall forfeit the Sum of Five Hundred Pounds to any Person who shall sue for the same in any of His Majesty's Courts of Record at Westminster by Action of Debt Bill Plaintiff or Information, wherein no Effoin Protection or Wager of Law, nor more than one Imparlance, shall be allowed. And in Case such Offender shall be the Lord High Chancellor, or any of the Judges, or either of the Secretaries of State, or any Clerk of the Peace, he shall, over and above such Penalty, be, from the Time of such Conviction, incapable of ever holding any Office of Trust or Profit. Provided always that every Suit, Action, or Prosecution for such Offence, shall be commenced within 12 Calendar Months next after the same shall have been committed, and not afterwards.

And whereas the Peers of Scotland in the Parliament of Great Britain are at present elected for Seven Years, whereby the said Peers of Scotland are not upon the same Footing with the Hereditary Peers of England, Be it enacted by the Authority aforesaid, that the Peers of Scotland shall, on the first Day of September next, proceed to the Election of sixteen Peers to sit in the Parliament of Great Britain for the Kingdom

K

of

of Scotland, and that such sixteen Peers so elected, and their Heirs Male succeeding to their Peerage, shall, from the Time of such Election, continue to sit and vote in the Parliaments of Great Britain, as Peers of Scotland, without any new Election for such Purpose. And when any Vacancy shall happen, by the Extinction of the Male Line in any of the Peerages belonging to the Peers elected to represent the Peerage of Scotland in the Parliament of Great Britain, such Vacancy shall be filled up by a Peer of Scotland, to be chosen by the Peers of Scotland; and the Peer so chosen, and his Heirs Male succeeding to his Title, shall, from the Time of such Election, continue to sit and vote in the Parliaments of Great Britain, as a Peer of Scotland, without any new Election for such Purpose.

And whereas Peers of Scotland having a Right to sit and vote in the Parliament of Great Britain, whether by Election of the Peers of Scotland, or by being also English Peers, ought not to have another Vote to be represented in the said Parliament, Be it enacted, that no Person having a Right to sit and vote in the Parliament of Great Britain, either as a Peer of England or of Scotland

Scotland, shall have a Right to vote for the Election of a Peer of Scotland to sit and vote in the said Parliament of Great Britain.

And whereas the Peers of Scotland, not elected to sit and vote in the Parliament of Great Britain, will have a more distant Prospect of being so elected, when the Right of sitting and voting is Hereditary in the Male Line of the Families of the Peers so elected, and when there will be no new Elections excepting when such Peerages in the Male Line shall become extinct; and it is unreasonable that the Peers of Scotland not elected as aforesaid should for so long a Time be deprived of the Capacity, which all other Subjects within the Realm have, of being created Peers of Great Britain, and of being elected Members of the House of Commons: And whereas it is also unreasonable that the eldest Sons, and Heirs apparent, of Peers of Scotland should not be eligible to represent the Commons of Scotland, in the same Manner as They, and the eldest Sons and Heirs apparent of the Peers of England, are eligible to represent the Commons in England, Be it enacted by the Authority aforesaid, that all Peers of

Scotland, as likewise the eldest Sons, and Heirs apparent, of Peers of Scotland, shall in future be capable of being created Peers of Great Britain, and of fitting and voting in Parliament in Consequence of such Creation, and that the prior Possession of a Peerage of Scotland, or being eldest Son, or Heir apparent, of a Peer of Scotland, shall be no Bar or Hindrance to such new Creation. And that all Peers of Scotland, not elected to sit and vote in the Parliament of Great Britain, and the eldest Sons, and Heirs apparent, of Peers of Scotland, shall be, and they are hereby declared to be, capable of being chosen to represent the Commons of Great Britain, for any Borough within the Realm, in the same manner as other Persons not having a Right to sit and vote in the House of Lords. And that the Possession of such Peerage of Scotland, or the being Eldest Son, or Heir apparent, of a Peer of Scotland, shall be no Bar or Hindrance to such Election, in any Borough or Place within the Realm.

Form

Form of the Writ to be issued by the Lord High Chancellor, on or before the 15th of April, every Year, to the High Sheriff of each County, and to the Chief Magistrate of each City, being a County of itself, in Great Britain.

GEORGE the Third, by the Grace of God of Great Britain, France and Ireland King, Defender of the Faith, and so forth. To the Sheriff of the County (or City) of Greeting. Whereas by the Advice and Assent of our Council for certain arduous and urgent Affairs, concerning us, the State and Defence of our Kingdom of Great Britain, and the Church, we have ordered a certain Parliament to be holden at our City of Westminster on the Day of next ensuing, then and there to treat and have Conference with the Prelates and Great Men and Peers of our Realm, Therefore we command and strictly enjoin you, that you cause Proclamation of the Day and Place aforesaid to be made in your next County Court to be holden after the Receipt of this our Writ, and that within four Days after receiving this our Writ, you issue your Precept to the Head Constable or Senior Peace Officer for the
Time

Time being, of each Borough within your County (or City) for the Election of one Member to serve in Parliament for such Borough, directing him, on the 1st of September next, to cause one Burgeſſes of the moſt ſufficient and diſcreet, freely and indifferently, to be elected by thoſe who ſhall be preſent at ſuch Election, according to the Form of an Act paſſed in the Year of our Reign entitled “ An Act for
 “ declaring and reſtoring the natural, un-
 “ alienable and equal Right of *All* the
 “ Commons of Great Britain (Infants,
 “ Perſons of insane Mind, and Criminals
 “ incapacitated by Law, only excepted)
 “ to vote in the Election of their Repre-
 “ ſentatives in Parliament: For regulating
 “ the Manner of ſuch Elections: For re-
 “ ſtoring annual Parliaments: For giving
 “ an Hereditary Seat to the Sixteen Peers
 “ which ſhall be elected for Scotland: And
 “ for eſtabliſhing more equitable Regula-
 “ tions concerning the Peerage of Scot-
 “ land.” And the Names of thoſe Burgeſ-
 ſes ſo to be elected (whether they be preſent
 or abſent) you cauſe to be inſerted in certain
 Indentures to be thereupon made between
 you and thoſe who ſhall be preſent at
 ſuch Election, and them at the Day and
 Place aforeſaid, you cauſe to come in ſuch
 manner, that the ſaid Burgeſſes for them-
 ſelves

selves and the Commonalty of the said
 Boroughs, may have from them full and
 sufficient Power to do and consent to those
 Things which then and there by the
 Common Council of our said Kingdom
 (by the Blessing of God) shall happen to
 be ordained upon the aforesaid Affairs, so
 that for Want of such Power, through an
 improvident Election of the said Burgeses,
 the aforesaid, Affairs may in no wise re-
 main unfinished. Willing nevertheless
 that neither you nor any other Sheriff of
 this our said Kingdom be in any wise
 elected. And that the Elections, in the
 full Boroughs in your County, so made
 distinctly and openly under your Seal and
 the Seals of those who shall be present at
 such Election, you do certify to us in our
 Chancery, at the Place aforesaid, immedi-
 ately after Returns shall have been made
 to your Precepts from the aforesaid Head
 Constables or Senior Peace Officers of
 each Borough within your said County,
 (or City) remitting to us one Part of the
 aforesaid Indentures annexed to these Pre-
 sents, together with this Writ. Witness
 ourself at Westminster the Day of
 in the Year of our Reign.

Form

Form of the Precept to be issued by the High Sheriff of each County, and by the Chief Magistrate of each City, being a County of itself, in Great Britain, every Year, within four Days after receiving the Writ from the Lord High Chancellor, to the Head Constable or Senior Peace Officer, for the Time being, of each Borough within his County or City.

— (to wit) A. B. Esqr. Sheriff of the County (or City) aforesaid, To the Head Constable or Senior Peace Officer of the Borough of in my said County (or City) Greeting. By Virtue of his Majesty's Writ under the Great Seal of Great Britain to me directed for electing a Burgeses to serve in the Parliament to be holden at the City of Westminster on the Day of next ensuing, for the Borough of aforesaid, These are therefore to will and require you that you make Proclamation within the said Borough of the Day of Election, and cause freely and indifferently to be elected one Burgeses of the most sufficient and discreet, by those who shall be present at such Election, according to the Form of an Act passed in the Year of our Reign, entitled " An Act for declaring and re-
" storing

“ restoring the natural, unalienable, and e-
 “ qual Right of ALL the Commons of
 “ Great Britain (Infants, Persons of in-
 “ sane Mind, and C.iminals incapacitated
 “ by Law, only excepted) to vote in the
 “ Election of their Representatives in
 “ Parliament: For regulating the Manner
 “ of such Elections: For restoring annual
 “ Parliaments: For giving an Hereditary
 “ Seat to the Sixteen Peers which shall be
 “ Elected for Scotland; And for establish-
 “ ing more equitable Regulations con-
 “ cerning the Peerage of Scotland.”—

And the Name of the said Burgeſs ſo e-
 lected (whether he ſhall be preſent or ab-
 ſent) you cauſe to be inſerted in certain
 Indentures to be made between me and
 thoſe who ſhall have Intereſt in ſuch Elec-
 tion, and that you cauſe Him to be and
 appear at his ſaid Maſteſty's Parliament to
 be holden at the ſaid City of Weſtminſter
 on the ſaid Day of next en-
 ſuing, ſo that the ſaid Burgeſs may have
 full and ſufficient Power for himſelf and
 the Commonalty of the ſaid Borough, to
 do and conſent to thoſe Things which of
 the Common Council of the ſaid Realm
 ſhall be requiſite and neceſſary to be done.
 And you are not to elect me or any other
 L Sheriff

Sheriff of Great Britain. And the said Election you are forthwith to certify to me, sending to me one Part of the said Indentures annexed to this Precept that I may certify the same to His Majesty in Chancery, Herein fail not. Given under the Seal of my Office this Day of in the Year of the Reign of our Sovereign Lord George the Third, of Great Britain and so forth, and in the Year of our Lord

N O T E.

THE Form of the Writs and Precepts still in use, (which is supposed to be very antient,) has been adhered to as much as possible... And it is remarkable that these Writs to the Sheriff still direct that all the Members for the County, and for every City, and for every Borough in his County, *shall be elected by those who at the Proclamation* (to be made in the County Court) *shall be present*, according to the Form of the Statute in such case made and provided: Indentures are to be made between the Sheriff and *those who shall be present at such Election*: the Election is to be made in *His full County* distinctly and
openly

openly and the Members are to come in such manner that they may have for themselves and the Commonalty of their respective Boroughs, &c. sufficient Power to do and consent to those Things which by the Common Council of the Kingdom may happen to be ordained upon the said affairs (on which Parliament is summon'd) so that for want of such Power, through an improvident Election of them, the said affairs may in no wise remain unfinished.

The Precept from the Sheriff also directs the Returning Officers of Cities and Boroughs that two Members shall speedily and *indifferently be Elected by those who shall be present at the said Election* according to the Form of the Statute in such Case made and provided.

F I N I S.

of any and the Members are to come in
such manner that they may have for them-
selves and the Community of their respective
Boroughs, &c. sufficient Power to do and
consent to those things which by the Com-
mon Council of the Kingdom may happen to
be ordained upon the said affairs (on which
Parliament is summoned) so that for want
of such Power, though an imprudent Ex-
ecution of them, the said affairs may in no
wise remain unfinished.

The Proceeding in the said Directs
the Return of the said Directs and Bo-
roughs that they shall speedily
and indifferently by those who
shall be appointed to receive the record-
ing to the form of the Statute in such
Case made and provided.

